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# Utopia in the Midwest: the Old Order Amish and the Hutterites

by

Dorothy Schwieder

Riding a horse-drawn plow, breaking the rich, black soil of Iowa, an Old Order Amishman prepares the ground for his spring crop. He is a member of a community of likeminded people, intent on upholding their centuries-old dream of religious perfection. Several hundred miles away to the north and west, another farmer wheels his modern tractor with the latest equipment through the flat fields of South Dakota. This man, a member of the Russian Hutterite religious community, is alike in many ways to the Iowa Amishman. The Hutterites of South Dakota and the Amish of Iowa have shared a conviction that their chosen way of life could be reproduced and perpetuated on the soil of the Midwest.

Looking, as did many Americans, for land and freedom, the Amish Mennonites from Pennsylvania and Ohio were among the first settlers moving into southeastern Iowa in the 1840s, while Russian Hutterites migrated to the Dakota plains in the 1870s.

Both Amish and Hutterites succeeded in their venture and today represent two of the most successful utopian societies in

existence. Even though they appear in some ways to be strikingly different—Hutterites live communally and utilize the most modern farm machinery while Amish believe in private property and generally farm with outdated equipment—both groups share vitally important agricultural convictions and practices. Their common beliefs in the superiority of agrarian life, isolation from outside influences, self-sufficiency in economic needs, large families, mutual assistance, minimum education, and restriction of expenditures have enabled both groups to achieve economic and social stability.

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The Amish material is based primarily on private interviews with members of the Old Order Amish society in Kalona, Hazleton, and Milton, Iowa. The material was supplemented by two pioneering studies of the Amish: Walter Kollmorgen's *The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania* (Washington, D.C.: Department of Agriculture, 1942) and Calvin George Bachman's "The Old Order Amish of Lancaster County," *Pennsylvania German Society: Proceedings and Addresses*, ed. by the Society (Norristown: Norristown Herald, Inc., 1942). Invaluable to any Amish study is John Hostetler's penetrating work, *Amish Society* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970). Melvin Gingerich's *Mennonites in Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1939) includes several chapters on the Old Order Amish in Iowa. *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, 1956, Vol. I-IV, contains a wide selection of material on both the Amish and Hutterites under such headings as education, history, and religious beliefs. John Hostetler's *Annotated Bibliography on the Old Order Amish* includes a complete list of published works on the Old Order group up to 1950. The major sources for the Hutterite material include the earliest analytical treatment by Lee Emerson Deets entitled *The Hutterites: A Study in Social Cohesion* (Gettysburg: Times and News Publishing Co., 1939). Also cited frequently are Hutterite material include the earliest analytical treatment by Stanford University Press, 1967); *The Hutterites in North America* by John Hostetler and Gertrude Huntington (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1967); and by Victor Peters *All Things Common, The Hutterian Way of Life* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1965). The most recent work is Marvin P. Riley's *South Dakota's Hutterite Colonies: 1874-1969* (Brookings: Agricultural Experiment Station, Bulletin 565, 1970), written to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary in South Dakota.





*Spring plowing near Kalona, Iowa (Photo by John Zielinski).*

### The Amish

Amish Mennonites and Hutterites share a common origin of early-day adversities. Born of the religious upheavals stemming from the Protestant Reformation, both groups became immersed in the Anabaptist movement. Composed of many small, radical, protestant sects in early sixteenth century Europe, the Anabaptists believed in separation of church and state, and refused to take oaths. Today, the Amish and the Hutterites, along with other Mennonites, are the three surviving Anabaptist groups in North America. Because of their religious convictions they suffered severe persecution throughout their European history and both established patterns of migration to new lands whenever persecution and demands for change became overwhelming.

The parent group of the Amish—the Mennonites—originated in the early 1500s in Switzerland and were first called Swiss Brethren. Following an early Anabaptist reformer, Menno Simons, the Mennonites took his name and adopted his teaching as the fundamentals of their faith. The Mennonites failed to maintain unity, and after considerable internal dissension, they divided into several distinct branches, one of which is the Amish.

A major controversy arose among Mennonites in 1693 over the practice of shunning, a method of punishing members for the violation of church rules by totally avoiding them until they repented. Believing that his fellow churchmen had become too lax regarding shunning, Jakob Ammons, a Swiss Mennonite minister, advocated a most extreme position that shun-



ning should be upheld as rigidly as possible, even to the extent of wives and husbands refusing to live with their banned spouses. The controversy split most European Mennonites into two factions, and the group that remained with Ammons came to be known as Amish.

The Amish have always been an agrarian people, but were frequently made to farm the poorer land in Europe because they did not belong to established churches. They were forced, therefore, to use innovative farming techniques such as fertilization and crop rotation. While farming in the German Palatinate they learned to rotate crops in a four-year cycle. The European Amish were quick to experiment with new farming methods and quick also to share their knowledge with others of their faith.

Even with superior farming methods and rapid agricultural adaptability it is doubtful if the Amish could have continued in Europe. They lived in compact, tightly structured communities, and to

maintain their living pattern, they needed additional areas of new land. During the late 1600s and early 1700s, land became increasingly difficult to obtain in Europe. This, along with sporadic religious persecution, convinced the Amish to look to a totally new area for future settlement.

The first Amish came to America in the early 1700s in response to William Penn's invitation to settle his colony; within a few years they had moved to Lancaster County. Settlement in the region proved a wise decision because of excellent farming conditions; fertile soil, gentle rolling terrain, adequate rainfall, moderate temperatures, and a long growing season all aided the Amish. Applying to fertile Pennsylvania soil their European agricultural techniques, the Amish quickly became known as superior farmers.

The earliest Iowa Amish were from Ohio and settled for a brief time in Lee County. Within a few years they moved to Johnson County and settled in Washington Township. Like their Pennsylvania



*Amish children leaving Sunday services (John Zielinski).*



*The entire family serves as a work force among the Amish (John Zielinski).*



forefathers, Iowa Amish selected an excellent location. Southeast Iowa offered adequate rainfall, fertile soil, sufficient timber, and a growing season of approximately 170 days. The agricultural practices which had served them so well in Europe and in the eastern United States were applied to southeastern Iowa, bringing them the same economic prosperity they had previously experienced.

Around 1850, a significant division took place in Amish society when a segment of the group began to resist further innovation and change in their way of life. The resulting split produced two groups—the Old Order and the New Order. The Old Order were distinguished by their resistance to social change, non-conforming manner, religious worship in their homes, and use of the horse and buggy. Their wearing apparel also set them apart since women wore long dark dresses and white prayer bonnets and men grew beards and wore large-brimmed hats, collarless shirts, and front-drop trousers. At the time of the division, approximately one-third of the group remained with the Old Order. The Amish split affected Iowa communities as it did all other Amish settlements in America.

To understand Amish society and its commitment to the soil, requires knowledge of its religious conviction as well as its history. The Amish central values are religious beliefs and practices which permeate their daily lives. Amish occupations, hours of work, means and destination of travel, choice of friends and mates, and economic habits are all structured by religious beliefs and considerations. The Amish view themselves as divine in the sense that they are “a chosen people



*Harvest with horse power in southeast Iowa (John Zielinski).*

of God.” To the Amish the only acceptable occupation is farming. One reason, of course, is that they have never known any other environment, but more important is their religious belief that as farmers they live closer to God and can better serve Him in their rural way of life. They consider themselves excellent farmers and feel there is a “special kind of divine blessing” responsible for their success.

Their rural setting enables them to better maintain other religious convictions as well. They believe that God desires them to be “not conformed to this world” (Romans 12:2), “not unequally yoked with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6:14), and to be a “peculiar people” (Titus 2:12); they must therefore live apart from non-Amish people as much as possible. As true Christians they must shut out evil conditions by turning away from worldly things. This leads specifically to the view that cities are centers of evil and must be avoided. In addition, marriages with outsiders are forbidden.



Their religious convictions also affect their farming methods. If an Amishman farms in a way that causes the soil to lose its fertility, it is considered as sinful as adultery or theft. The matter is brought before the church membership, for they believe that robbing the soil of its fertility is a sin against both God and man.

These convictions combined with a rural way of life have enabled Amish people to successfully resist change in their social and religious behavior. From this background "a mentality has developed that prefers the old rather than the new." Living in compact settlements where similar customs and a strong sense of community and mutual aid exist, they have very successfully maintained a "slow-changing society, still reminiscent of peasant life several centuries ago." (Hostetler, *Amish Society*, p. 11).

### The Hutterites

The Hutterites became established in 1528, several years prior to the formation of Mennonite congregations. Before migrating to the new world, Hutterites lived for 350 years in Europe where they founded major settlements in Moravia, Slovakia, Transylvania, and Russia. Early in their history they adopted the principle of communal property believing that if they held "all things common" they practiced the one true religion and hence experienced a superior life. Alternating between prosperity and persecution and at times finding their membership reduced to a mere handful, the Hutterites nevertheless managed to survive and continued their religious communal practices throughout their European existence.

Originating in Moravia, the earliest

Hutterites were soon forced to leave the country because of religious persecution. After the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, they returned to their Moravian homes and remained there throughout the sixteenth century. Surrounding manorial lords soon recognized the Hutterites' craft skills and invited them to settle on their estates. Once on the estates, Hutterites established settlements called *Bruderhofs* which enabled them to better follow their religious-communal convictions. Living conditions were arranged to facilitate the Hutterites' desire for isolation and communism. Each *Bruderhof* was a community in itself and usually consisted of several large, three-story buildings and several smaller houses arranged around a village square. The ground floor contained rooms for community living, such as dining hall, kitchen, and nursery, while the upper floors contained private living quarters for each family. The Hutterites in each *Bruderhof* strove for self-sufficiency, and, with their own fields, woods, ponds, and workshops, they often achieved their goal. Each settlement had a manager, a member appointed to handle the business matters of the *Bruderhof*, which consisted of buying and selling goods, and making work assignments. Within their community most occupations were represented: masons, blacksmiths, sicklesmiths, dyers, shoemakers, furriers, wheelwrights, saddlers, cutlers, watchmakers, tailors, weavers, glass and rope makers, brewers, and other occupations. Under these conditions the Hutterites prospered and attracted many new members. They often refer to this period as the Golden Age.

With the coming of the eighteenth century, prosperity faded as dominant reli-



*Left, a social gathering of Amish women. Upper right, a well-kept Amish farm. Lower right, Amishmen in conversation (Photos by John Zielinski).*



*Upper left, Hutterite men at a communal and segregated meal. Lower left, Hutterite carpenter in his shop equipped with power tools. Lower right, leisure time (Photos courtesy of Marvin Riley, S. Dakota State U., Experiment Station).*





gious groups began once more to persecute the small sect. Moravian officials eventually expelled all Hutterites and for the next 150 years they suffered extreme persecution as they wandered eastward, settling for a time in Transylvania and later Slovakia. Pressures from political and religious authorities and the Turkish-Russian war reduced their numbers. Finally the Hutterites moved to the Russian Ukraine where they were promised freedom to practice their way of life. Movement into this area required some adjustments, however, in the Hutterites' economic activities. The region lacked resources and markets for their craft products but contained a great abundance of available land. The result was heavier emphasis on agricultural production, a practice which has continued to the present. Even with de-emphasis on craft work the Brethren remained highly self-sufficient through home production.

In 1870, after 100 years of considerable prosperity in Russia, the Czar began persecutions anew. The group migrated once again, this time to the New World and the plains of southeastern Dakota.

Throughout their European existence the Hutterites' religious and social beliefs changed very little; following their migration, life in America continued much the same as they had experienced it in Russia. Believing that God sanctioned their way of life and desired them to live communally, they also believed that they must practice nonresistance, isolate themselves from the world, live in a simple manner, and refuse to take any oaths except to God. These beliefs—called Central Beliefs—were set down in the sixteenth century and still guide the Hutterites today.

In 1874, sparsely settled Dakota Territory offered the Hutterites land as well as an unstructured social environment where they might isolate themselves from worldly influences and continue their Old World ways. This was a period of extreme hardship, however, as Dakota proved a hostile environment to settlers throughout the 1860s and early 1870s. Moving into an area traditionally characterized by marginal rainfall, lack of timber, blizzards, hail, and prairie fires, the settlers also experienced a period of extended drought. Because of geographical and climatical conditions in Dakota, settlers discovered that farming required more capital than in prairie states like Iowa. Farmers faced initial costs of purchasing food, farm equipment, fencing materials, livestock, housing materials, and well digging. To compound farmers' problems, it was often difficult to secure credit, and farm prices remained low. The drought and natural adversities of the region greatly reduced crop yields and many of the earliest farmers admitted defeat and headed back east.

While other early Dakotans were giving up in despair, the Hutterites quickly adjusted their economic institutions to the plains environment. The Hutterites were not typical pioneers because unlike the average pioneer setting up an individual household, the Brethren came as a "large scale diversified enterprise." (Bennett, *Hutterian Bretheren*, p. 165). In the areas of land, labor, and capital, the Hutterites had a decided advantage over their neighbors. The exact amount of money brought by them from Russia is not known, but it was obviously substantial since they purchased land rather than utilizing the



Homestead Act. With large amounts of capital the Hutterites purchased extensive acreages and quickly diversified their farming operations. Within the first year of their operations they were experiencing economies of large scale farming and hence greater economic stability. Moreover, Hutterites continued their European practice of "selective adoption" whereby they adopted technological changes in farm machinery and methods without any corresponding change in their religious attitudes or behavior patterns. In this way the Hutterites transplanted their European society—a fully developed social, economic, and religious system—to the hostile Dakota plains with minimal adjustment problems.

Thus, beginning originally as Anabaptists and quickly adopting the "community of goods" principle, the Brethren have successfully retained their traditional society for 350 years in Europe and almost 100 years in the United States. Throughout their European experience—in Moravia, Transylvania, Slovakia, and Russia—when confronted with demands for change, they have chosen instead to forego land and possessions and sought new frontiers where they might continue their old ways. In spite of 300 years of persecution and continued relocation, the Hutterites established set religious beliefs and community behavior that resulted in strong cohesive ties and clear-cut goals for their future. Immigrating to the United States, their religious-communitarian society not only survived the hostile Dakota environment

in the 1870s but the Hutterites initiated a policy of expansion that they have continued to the present.

### Amish and Hutterites Today

The history of the Amish and Hutterites in the New World is a story of success. As it did for so many others, America offered these two utopian societies available land and freedom. Bringing with them from Europe tightly structured, well-developed, economic and religious systems, both groups have succeeded in maintaining stability in the United States. In comparing their societies today, similar economic patterns appear that were first evident in their Old World existence: they share agrarian based, agrarian dominated lives which are tradition oriented, and very slow to change.

The great, all encompassing feature of Amish and Hutterite societies is their belief in the superiority of agrarian living. Their religion demands that they work as farmers, and it is this foundation that makes possible most of their other common economic practices. A rural environment allows them separation from the outside world and makes possible a high degree of economic self-sufficiency. In a rural setting with a minimum of economic expenditures and limited formal education, their large families produce an abundant labor supply and are assets rather than liabilities. Their simple manner of living allows them to tightly restrict all expenditures. The Hutterites' communal



pattern and the Amish policy of mutual assistance provide a pooling of community resources that results in greater strength and solidarity. Without the agricultural setting it is doubtful that either group could survive.

Hutterite and Amish families strive to be as self-sufficient as possible and both groups exhibit near self-sufficiency in food and clothing needs. Large gardens and orchards (wherever climate permits) are considered essential. During the summer months, wives and children spend many hours planting, hoeing, and harvesting the produce. Food is then canned and provides the family with a year's supply of vegetables and some fruit. In many Amish homes, canning is a family affair and all members help out. The families' meat supply is also provided at home with seasonal slaughtering of livestock, and chickens are a part of all farmsteads. The Hutterites' food production methods are much the same only carried out on

a larger scale. Self-sufficiency is equally evident with clothing needs as Amish and Hutterite wives and daughters make most, if not all, of their families' garments. With their unchanging styles, an article of clothing is never discarded but handed down from one family member to the next and used until it is totally worn out. These activities have several important results: first, they significantly reduce expenditures, particularly in view of the large number of children. Second, these activities maintain families as productive units. The family not only functions as a unit with a sense of togetherness, but the family unit takes on increased importance. Amish and Hutterite families have not suffered disintegration through loss of function as have so many other American families.

One source of self-sufficiency is the large family which assures an ample labor supply. Children among the Hutterites are quickly taken into the community's life



*Laundry soap is homemade in Hutterite colonies (left), but the washing is done in the most modern machines (Marvin Riley).*



and assume responsibilities at an early age. Although less structured, the Amish also encourage their children to begin work early, a custom which allows the Amish to reject labor-saving devices because their many children provide adequate hand labor.

The children's role as well as other features of Amish and Hutterite life makes possible the two groups' policy of restricted expenditures. In Hutterite life the "ideal of austerity" governs acquisitions. They believe that ownership of personal possessions is sinful, and they buy only absolute necessities such as farm implements or items they cannot produce. Television sets and radios are regarded as worldly and therefore forbidden. This results in increased savings for the entire colony which can be used later to finance additional colonies. Hutterites make a distinction, however, between personal possessions and adoption of economic and technical devices which they believe have a useful function in colony life. Believing that their very existence depends on their use of large, modern farm machinery, most Hutterite colonies have more up-to-date equipment and processing methods than their non-Hutterite neighbors. The Hutterites thus believe that their adoption of such new technology as larger combines and tractors, conserves rather than destroys their way of life. An exception, however, concerns Hutterite women. A strong effort is made to prevent their work habits from changing, so adoption of new equipment for gardening, painting, and domestic work is restricted.

The Amish also practice consumption austerity; expenditures are sharply limited as money is spent only for necessities.

Their religious beliefs prohibit spending on jewelry, nonbiblical storybooks, commercial entertainment, cosmetics, and haircuts. They are more selective in their spending habits than the Hutterites as they reject not only worldly devices like television sets and radios, but also electricity, telephones, and automobiles.

The Amish are particularly frugal about the purchase of farm machinery and weigh expenditures very carefully. Unless there is an absolute need for a new or different implement, it is not purchased. In the Kalona area, the average amount invested in machinery per farm has been estimated at approximately \$1,500. Most machinery is about forty or fifty years old, but will continue to be used as long as it can be repaired. Amishmen are highly adept at fashioning replacement parts, since in many instances new parts are no longer available. Many Amish farmers use horses for field work so equipment needs are simplified and the life of equipment definitely prolonged.

In observing similarities between Amish and Hutterites, it appears that one area of incompatibility is the basic economic organization of the communities—Hutterites' communism and Amish private property holdings. Upon closer observation, however, differences are minimized. While Hutterites hold everything common, Amish people practice a high degree of mutual assistance that results in what could be termed a semi-communal society. It is one of the most significant advantages the Amish enjoy in maintaining their economic stability.

The Amish practice of mutual aid extends to all areas of their lives, but perhaps is most significant in regard to their





*Hutterite colonists farm the Great Plains with the latest and most efficient diesel tractors (Marvin Riley).*

financial needs. Young Amishmen desiring to purchase their own farms can depend on assistance from their families as well as other Amishmen. Sometimes the son or son-in-law receives the farm as an outright gift; in other cases they purchase it but at a much lower price than if sold to a non-Amishman. When money is loaned to a family member the interest rate is about half the rate charged by a commercial firm. Money loaned to non-family members is slightly higher.

Mutual aid is beneficial to Amish people in other financial areas as well. Amishmen do not believe in commercial insurance, but have an agreement among church members that covers loss of farm buildings due to fire or windstorm. The farmer suffering the loss will pay one-fourth the cost himself and the remaining three-fourths is divided among other church members. Settlement is usually

reached within sixty days. When an Amishman borrows from an outside source, church members draw up an agreement in which they guarantee the repayment of the loan. This is then signed by the farmer requesting the loan and the bishop of the church district. If Amish families are unable to pay medical bills or other expenses these are paid by the entire church district. The matter is handled by the bishop who collects the bills, assesses each family in the district according to its ability to pay, and then reimburses the creditor.

The results of the Amishmen's mutual aid policy is a tightly knit, unified community where each family, although operating as a separate unit, has the backing of all community members and potential use of all community resources. It is a practice which approximates to a significant degree the communal organization





*An Amishman taking hay to the barn (John Zielinski).*



*Hutterite youths at a similar task (Marvin Riley).*

In the area of education Amish and Hutterites share methods and goals through which they seek to maintain their unchanging ways. Since education of the young is a major way of maintaining their way of life, it must be controlled and limited. Both groups believe that education beyond the eighth grade is unnecessary and possibly dangerous. Hutterites maintain that further education will dis-

courage or weaken the fear of God in their children. They place heavy stress upon the education of their children as a means of instilling in them obedience to God and indoctrinating them in their communal religious ways. The Hutterites maintain their own colony schools but, in compliance with state law, hire a certified individual to teach what they refer to as "English School." They view the state-required educational system as contrary to their goals and counteract the influence wherever possible. Before the regular school session, children attend one-half hour of "German School" where they learn the German language, catechism, history, and beliefs of their people. At the end of the day, following "English School," the children remain for an additional half-hour of "German School." This system has been described as a



"blanket of counter-indoctrination" which surrounds the English school session. (Deets, *The Hutterites*, p. 46).

The Amish maintain that their children do not need any education beyond eighth grade to be competent farmers, nor do their children need subjects like the new mathematics. They contend that they teach the four Rs—reading, writing, arithmetic, and respect—and that is sufficient. They maintain rural parochial schools, but in many instances their teachers are not certified. Some Amish attend public rural schools, but only where the other children are Beachy Amish or Conservative Mennonites. They have strenuously resisted attempts to send their children to public schools. Like the Hutterites, Amish believe that limited formal education is a tool to further their own social-religious behavior as well as to achieve the rudiments of basic education, and where they maintain their own schools, religious training is incorporated into the curriculum.

### Summary

In a rapidly changing world, the Amish and Hutterites exercise time-proven traditions and beliefs which enable them to retain a great many of their Old World ways. With the exception of Hutterites' constant adoption of new farm technology, the two societies live much the same as they did centuries ago. Both are part of the American utopian movement because of their shared convictions that they are a chosen people and are living a superior life, but while most utopian groups have hoped to change society, Amish and Hutterites have desired only

to maintain the status quo. Their great need has been land and isolation and, at the time of their respective migrations, both were plentiful in America.

The location of their settlements had far-reaching effects on their North American agrarian practices. The Hutterites, settling on the Great Plains, found it necessary to continue their innovative agricultural ways, while the Amish, because of their locations, were allowed to retreat from their European patterns. The Hutterites' settlement in Dakota placed them on the eastern border of the Great Plains. This locality with its characteristics of limited rainfall and special weather phenomena demanded that Hutterites farm extensively rather than intensively as most agriculturists had done in the prairie and woodland regions. Large acreages, increased capital, and an abundant labor supply meant the Hutterites could succeed in the Plains even in times of great stress. Equally important, their advantages led to quicker diversification to offset frequent intervals of drought and locust. As larger and more efficient machines were marketed, the Hutterites in keeping with their European experience quickly adopted them. Their special advantages, derived from communal living, plus modernized, efficient farming, aided them in effectively competing with non-Hutterite neighbors. Thus the agricultural practices that Hutterites brought from Europe were perpetuated by the American locality in which they settled. Moreover, because of their particular environment, the Brethren had and continue to have no other option but to maintain these policies.

The Amish fared differently. They



brought from Europe careful farming methods and a predisposition for rapid adoption of new methods, but their settlements in the New World allowed them to partially discard these characteristics. Land in southeastern Pennsylvania was very different from Amish land in Europe, and no special techniques or new crops were necessary to make it produce abundantly. Their four-year crop rotation program, heavy use of manure for ferti-



*Making bread at a Hutterite colony.*

lizing, and meticulous farming habits all produced successful farming. With this experience the Amish gradually ceased to be experimenters or quick adaptors, relying instead on their time-proven, traditional methods. With their movements into Ohio, Delaware, Maryland, and other eastern states—all similar in agricultural features—the same methods continued to bring success. Settlement in Iowa proved no exception; fertile soil, adequate rainfall, and available land allowed the Amish

to continue their agrarian patterns. Today in Iowa, Amish continue the same methods used 200 years ago in Pennsylvania. Some use tractors for field work, but most prefer horses, and new methods, such as contour farming, are regarded suspiciously. Only in these predictable agricultural regions could Amish ignore change, retain small acreages, and rely almost exclusively on the same procedures for more than 200 years.

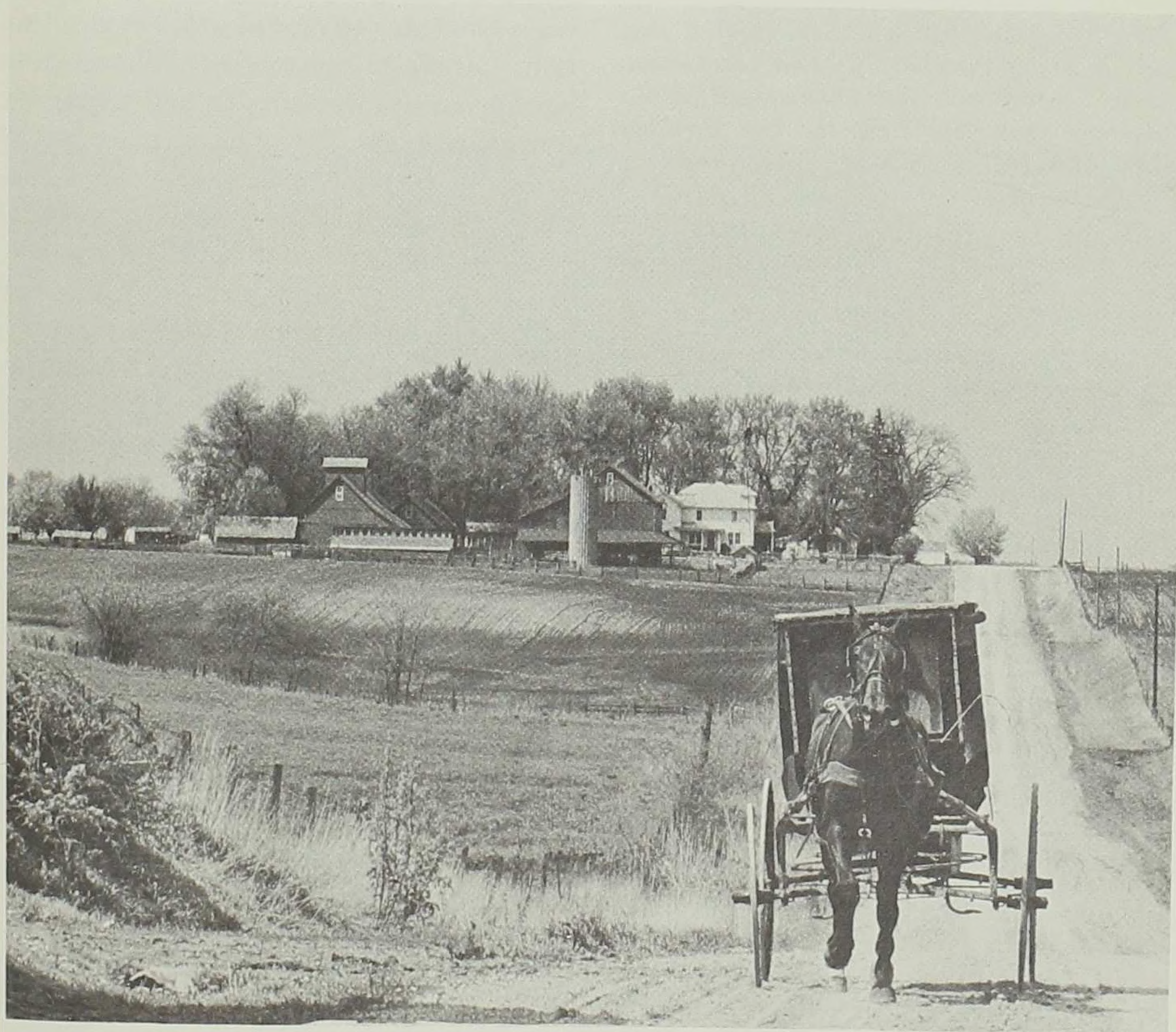
Perhaps, if early settlements had been reversed, their life-styles and agrarian practices would have developed significant differences. There is little reason to doubt the Hutterites' success almost anywhere, particularly in the eastern half of the United States, if land was available. Initially, perhaps, the Amish could have adapted to the Plains environment, but if they should migrate today with their great resistance to all change, their success in that area is highly doubtful. At present, both groups appear well situated in their respective localities. If, however, old patterns are repeated and further migrations become necessary, the Hutterites would appear to have a decided advantage because of their American experience which demanded retention of adaptability and hence flexibility.

Today, both groups are expanding in members and developing new communities. Between 1960 and 1969, Hutterites established nine new colonies in South Dakota alone, while also establishing additional colonies in Montana and Canada. Today they have over 200 colonies which contain approximately 200,000 people with a South Dakota population of nearly 3,000. The Amish are also increasing, both in members and settlements. Three com-



munities now live in Iowa, the most recent established near Milton in 1968. Within the past several years they have also established about five new communities in Missouri. In each locality, even though a few families leave the Old Order each year (usually to join a Con-

servative Mennonite congregation), the high birthrate produces a continual increase of members. South Dakota Hutterites and Iowa Amish today represent two of the most unchanging but rapidly expanding utopian societies in North America. □



(John Zielinski)